

A Life Worth Living
Session 8 June 23 2024 New Resources
Philippians 4:1-9

Resource: 'A Life Worth Living' Video 8
(Videos can be found at www.woodside-church.org under the sermons tab)

Icebreaker: in what areas of your life are you currently learning new skills or competencies? Share with one another how you're learning these things.

Introduction

Key Point: We must put into practice everything we learn about the Lord

Key Verse: *"Whatever you have learned or received from me, or seen in me – put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you."* (v.9)

Read Philippians 4:1-9

1. Build good relationships with other Christians (Philippians 4:2-3)

The Point: unresolved disagreements split churches; good friendships build them

- Eudonia and Syntyche have fallen out with each other (v.2) ; Paul urges each to take the initiative to reach agreement and calls on others to help.

Tell a personal story about a personality clash you or a friend overcame

Application: Name the person in your mind who you disagree or clash with at church (or even at work), resolve to find common ground with them and to pray for them.

2. Build a good relationship with Jesus (Philippians 4:4-7)

The Point: a firm relationship with God acts as a sure foundation for our whole lives

Paul gives 3 keys on how to stand firm in Jesus (v.1):

a) *"Enjoy the Lord"* (v.4)

- Optimism is good, as is rejoicing in good jobs, happy marriages, great friendships, but **rejoicing in the Lord is the source of true joy and strength**
- This is a central theme of Paul's letter ("rejoice" 16 times!), twice here for emphasis

b) *"Expect the Lord"* (v.5)

- *"Gentleness"* (v.5) = moderation, graciousness and willingness to forego retaliation
We need not worry about defending ourselves because God is coming to vindicate us
- *"The lord is near"* double sense of (i) time, (ii) presence, slight paradox: we live in the 'now and not yet,' expect him with excitement and abide in presence

c) *"Entreat the Lord"* (v.6-7)

- In prayer we leave our worries with God and receive his peace in exchange
- We should be specific about every situation we face (v.6)
- A journal/diary may help to note answers, so we can pray *"with thanksgiving"* (v.6), *"peace"* (v.7). Meaning "wholeness, well-being, oneness with God, every blessing"!

Tell a brief story of when you were anxious, prayed, and got God's peace. Share a personal story of answered prayer

Paul tells us the key to standing firm is to rejoice, endure and pray. Which of these do you find most challenging to do and why?

Application: Find and guard a daily time of prayer, worship and bible reading to build our relationship with God. If you keep one, review your journal or prayer diary and give thanks to God for all the prayers he has answered.

3. Build a good thought-life (Philippians 4:8)

The Point: We must set our mind on good things, not feed them mental junk food

- What we think effects who we are, and every area of our life (Matt 15:19-20)
- Our culture constantly tempts us not to think morally good or pure thoughts
- We evict wrong thoughts by letting right thoughts take residence

Application: Find 5 minutes over the next few days to review what you've said over the last few days and what you've fed your mind on (books, magazines, TV, etc.) – what changes can you make to improve your thought life?

4. Build on the example of other Christians you respect (Philippians 4:9)

The Point: We can learn by following the example set by other godly men and women

Paul asks them to follow not just his teaching, but his *lifestyle*, his words *and* actions. The supreme example is Jesus (Hebrews 12:2), but we learn from one another too.

- What is a daily practice you can do to help you stand firm in your faith?
- Other than Jesus, are there people in your life who you aspire to live like? What is it about their lives that makes them a good example?

Application: Think who that person is for you. Resolve to spend some time with them – join them in a task, or invite them for dinner – so that you can learn from them.

Ideas for Ministry

Imagine what peace we could unleash in our lives by building good relationships with Jesus and one another, building a healthy thought life, and building on great examples of others – wouldn't that be amazing?

- As one large group ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to us any areas of unforgiveness, offence or bitterness against others that we can repent of and be set free from – then turn into 2's/3's to pray that God would grant an opportunity to put it right.
- As one large group ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to us any areas where our motivations are not pure, or where our thought-life is unclean, out of control or disordered. Turn into 2's/3's to pray for healing, purity and self-control.

After today's discussion what is one action you will take this week?